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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 003022

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN FM TELLS AMB JONES HE WILL VISIT IRAQ

Classified By: CDA David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) See action request para 5.

Summary

[1](#)2. (C) Newly appointed Jordanian Foreign Minister Farouq Qasrawi told Senior Advisor and Coordinator for Iraq Policy Richard Jones April 12 that he will work to improve relations with Iraq and is ready to visit Baghdad to congratulate the new Iraqi government. Qasrawi supports the idea of a U.S.-EU sponsored conference to be held in June in Brussels for the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) to present its vision of a new Iraq. Qasrawi will continue to engage Iraqi Sunnis to participate in the political process. End Summary.

Ready to go to Iraq

[1](#)3. (C) During an April 12 meeting, FM Qasrawi complemented the comprehensive agenda for Iraq as presented by Ambassador Jones and said that he would work to improve Jordan-Iraq relations. Qasrawi expressed a strong desire to expand Jordanian dialogue with Iraq and claimed he was ready to go to Baghdad to congratulate the new government once it was formed. Qasrawi listed the many areas of cooperation between the two countries, including police and military training.

Support for U.S.-EU Conference

[1](#)4. (C) Qasrawi expressed his support for a U.S.-EU sponsored conference in Brussels where the ITG would present its vision of a new Iraq to the international community. He felt it was important that the Iraqis form a government as soon as possible and draft a constitution according to the current timetable. Ambassador Nabih Shuqom - attending the meeting as Chief of the American and European Desk at the Foreign Ministry - half jokingly interjected that perhaps it would be better if the constitution were not ratified. Shuqom noted that, under the TAL, new elections could then be held in which the Sunni Arabs would, he hoped, participate. Jones quickly emphasized that the time delay created by any type of postponement would likely be filled with more violence. Qasrawi agreed with Jones and reiterated his support for producing a constitution by the current deadline. He promised that Jordan would continue to engage with Iraqi Sunni Arabs to encourage them to participate in the political process, particularly drafting the constitution.

Comment and Action Request

[1](#)5. (C) On only his third day as Foreign Minister, Qasrawi showed his willingness to accommodate by leaving his first cabinet meeting early to meet with Ambassador Jones' delegation. Unlike previous foreign ministers, Qasrawi surrounded himself with staff during the meeting, though this may reflect his lack of time to come fully up to speed on Iraq given his recent appointment. Jones met separately with Royal Court Minister Marwan Muasher, who also reiterated Jordan's support for efforts to encourage responsible Sunni figures to enter the political process. He also expressed support for the U.S.-EU conference. Action Request: Jordan has been a proposed venue for a May or June Iraq donor conference. Depending on timing of the Brussels meeting, we may need to suggest a brief delay in the Jordanians' plans. Please advise.

[1](#)6. (U) This message was cleared by Ambassador Jones.

[1](#)7. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

HALE